

I MEMORY

I am running.

That's the first thing I remember. Running. I carry something, my arm curled around it, hugging it to my chest. Bread, of course. Someone is chasing me. "Stop! Thief!" I run. People. Shoulders. Shoes. "Stop! Thief!"

Sometimes it is a dream. Sometimes it is a memory in the middle of the day as I stir iced tea or wait for soup to heat. I never see who is chasing and calling me. I never stop long enough to eat the bread. When I awaken from dream or memory, my legs are tingling.

II SUMMER

He was dragging me, running. He was much bigger. My feet skimmed over the ground. Sirens were screaming. His hair was red. We flew through streets and alleyways. There were thumping noises, like distant thunder. The people we bounced off didn't seem to notice us. The sirens were screaming like babies. At last we plunged into a dark hole.

"You're lucky," he said. "Soon it won't be ladies chasing you. It will be Jackboots."

"Jackboots?" I said.

"You'll see."

I wondered who the Jackboots were. Were unfooted boots running along the streets?

"Okay," he said, "hand it over."

"Hand what over?" I said.

He reached into my shirt and pulled out the loaf of bread. He broke it in half. He shoved one half at me and began to eat the other.

"You're lucky I didn't kill you," he said. "That lady you took this from, I was just getting ready to snatch it for myself."

"I'm lucky," I said.

He burped, "You're quick. You took it before I even knew what happened. That lady was rich. Did you see the way she was dressed? She'll just buy ten more."

I ate my bread.

More thumping sounds in the distance. "What is that?" I asked him.

"Jackboot artillery," he said.

"What's artillery?"

"Big guns. Boom boom. They're shelling the city." He stared at me. "Who are you?"

I didn't understand the question.

"I'm Uri," he said. "What's your name?"

I gave him my name. "Stopthief."

Name _____

Use with Excerpt from *Milkweed*

Questions to an Aspiring Writer:

1. What types of sentences do you see more than others?
 - Compound-complex?
 - Compound?
 - Complex?
 - Simple?
 - Fragments?
2. Which of these sentence types helped you the most imagine the scene in your mind?
Give an example from the text:
3. Which of these sentence types helped you the most understand the pace of the selection?
Give an example from the text:
4. Highlight any brush strokes you see in the text.
5. What words from the selection put questions in your mind?
 - Are these questions because you don't understand the text, or are they questions because you feel intrigued?
6. What do you think about Spinelli's use of single word fragments for this piece?
 - Is this technique something you think you would want to try? Why or why not?
7. Using indirect characterization, make a list of everything you can infer about the character of Uri.
8. Using indirect characterization, make a list of everything you can infer about the narrator.

9. This may have taken you anywhere between 2-5 minutes to read. How long do you think this excerpt would take on screen? Explain your answer.

10. Based on the writing style, do you think this is a dream or a memory? Explain your answer.

11. Think of a dream that you've had. Preferably a reoccurring dream or a recent dream, but any dream will do. Describe the dream below (Be prepared to share):

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

"But Mrs. Hyde, I don't dream!" -You better make something up and not let me know about it. The STAAR test doesn't care and neither do I.

Want to read more?

Spinelli, Jerry. *Milkweed*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003. Print.

AR- 7pts

BL- 3.6

